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# THE HINDU

## **Pests eat away 35% of total crop yield, says ICAR scientist**



### **‘Such large-scale crop loss has adverse effect on biosafety’**

About 30-35% of the annual crop yield in India gets wasted because of pests, according to P.K. Chakrabarty, assistant director general (plant protection and biosafety) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. He said that among such pests, nematodes (microscopic worms many of which are parasites) had recently emerged as a major threat to crops in the country and they caused loss of 60 million tonnes of crops annually. He also said that such large-scale crop-loss was having an adverse effect on the agricultural biosafety which was “paramount to food security.”

“Nematodes, consisting of roundworms, threadworms and eelworms, are causing loss of crops to the tune of almost 60 million tonnes or 10-12 % of crop production every year,” said Mr. Chakrabarty. He was speaking at the XIII Annual Group Meeting of All India Co-ordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Nematodes in Cropping System in the city on Friday. “The farmers are still not fully aware about these potential crop-destroyers,” he added.

The Dean of Indian Council of Agricultural Research HS Gaur expressed his apprehension about the spread of nematode in the country. Citing the instance of a particular kind of nematode which affected plants such as potatoes and tomatoes, he said the Potato Cyst Nematode was first discovered in the Nilgiris and had now spread to various parts of the country.